

## **ASPIRA, Inc. of New Jersey**

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MS. MARIA MERCADO  
Chairperson

MS. GRIZEL UBARRY  
Executive Director

August 14, 1979

Mr. Joseph A. Furfey, Manager  
Area Development & Urban Affairs  
First Jersey National Bank  
One Exchange Place  
Jersey City, N. J. 07302

Dear Joseph:

I am pleased that we were able to talk extensively about the work of Aspira, Inc. of New Jersey.

The Aspira staff has had discussions with First Jersey National Bank since 1970, however, Aspira has never received a contribution from First Jersey.

I would like to briefly summarize Aspira's programs and history. Established in 1968 as a community-based self-help agency, Aspira works to break the grim cycle of poverty, inadequate schooling, and sense of hopelessness for Puerto Rican and other Hispanic youth, through education and leadership development.

Aspira currently serves over 2,000 teenagers and young adults throughout the State. There are 20 clubs in junior and senior high schools and community centers throughout cities in Essex, Passaic and Hudson Counties. A major community in South Jersey is seeking funds to open a new Aspira center there in 1980.

Now entering its tenth year of service to Hispanic youth, Aspira's programs have been expanded to reach not only those with exceptional potential for higher education, but also under-achievers and school dropouts. Aspira offers vocational and adult education programs, neighborhood based clubs, juvenile delinquency prevention programs, and most recently, programs in the creative arts. We are succeeding in making a difference in the lives of the large number of teenagers society too often writes off as losers.

As the enclosed 1978 Annual Report shows, educational, recreational and counseling services were provided to a total of 2,146 Hispanic young people --500 more than the previous year. Of that number, Aspira placed 449 students in post-secondary institutions to obtain the education that is so necessary today to become a skilled and constructive member of society.

There is an especially great need for health care professionals within the Hispanic community. Through the health careers program, we are helping students obtain the professional training and education required. Part of this program includes a commitment by the young person to work in the Hispanic community. Last year, Aspira placed eight college graduates in medical and dental schools. This year we have doubled these placements, 13 in medical school and three in dental school, with a much larger number beginning their training in other health care fields. (It is worth noting that throughout the nation only 147 Puerto Ricans were admitted to medical schools in 1977-78).

I am enclosing our budget for Fiscal Year 1980, as well as a list of private grants and contributions for the last three years. Over 85% of Aspira's budget is obtained through government contracts of the remaining 15%, foundations contribute the lion's share and you will note that we were successful in doubling our foundation support in Fiscal Year '79.

Corporate support has remained virtually at the same level for the past three years. However, we were just informed by Prudential that they are doubling their contribution to Aspira this year. We are optimistic that this will help open the door for new and increased corporate supporters which benefit in so many ways from Aspira's work.

We would like to request that First Jersey National Bank consider a contribution to Aspira, Inc. of New Jersey this year. We would also like to request assistance from you in reaching banks and corporations who may be potential supporters of our Hudson County programs. We do have a Hudson County Center in Jersey City meeting the needs of Hispanic youngsters in Jersey City and Hoboken. Even though we have had extensive involvement in those communities, we have no corporate support. We need to develop close and personal contact with potential funding sources and we look to you as the leading bank in Jersey City to play an instrumental role in facilitating this. Could we meet further to discuss this possibility?

I look forward to hearing from you and will continue to keep you informed of our efforts to raise the level of educational achievement among New Jersey's young Hispanic population.

Sincerely yours,

Grizel Ubarry  
Executive Director

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Enclosures: Annual Report  
List of 3-year contributions  
Budget - Fiscal Year 1980  
Tax-exempt Certificate